

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 01197 01 OF 02 112302Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
DHA-02 EUR-12 AID-05 MCT-01 /089 W
-----112351Z 001939 /73

P 112210Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3664

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAN SALVADOR 1197

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PGOV, PINS, ES

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S BREAKFAST FOR DIPLOMATIC CORPS

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MOLINA GAVE BRIEFING TO DIPLOMATIC CORPS
AND FOREIGN MILITARY IN COUNTRY ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS,
ASSERTING "INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST" INTERVENTION
REQUIRED DECISIVE ACTIONS ON PART OF GOVERNMENT WHICH RESULTED
FEW DEATHS AND WOUNDED AND EXPULSION SEVERAL FOREIGN
PRIESTS INCLUDING TWO US. BOTH HE AND GEN ROMERO INSISTED
MARGIN OF ELECTION VICTORY FOR LATTER SO GREAT THAT ANY
ACCUSATION OF GROSS FRAUD RENDERED INVALID. COMMANDER OF TROOPS
WITH TASK OF CLEAN-UP OF PLAZA LIBERTAD AFTER ELECTIONS
GAVE ACCOUNT CONTAINING INFORMATION IN NUMBER OF RESPECTS CONTRAD-
ICTING THAT WHICH HAD RECEIVED FROM SEVERAL SEPARATE SOURCES.
FOREIGN MINISTER EXPECTED EARLY RATIFICATION OF MEDIATION AGREEMENT
WITH HONDURAS AND POSSIBLE FIRST MEETINGS IN 30 TO 45 DAYS.
I FOUND THAT FOR SUBSTANTIVE REASONS AND REASONS OF FORM,
USE OF THIS CAPTIVE AUDIENCE TECHNIQUE DID LITTLE TO ENHANCE SALVA-
DORAN IMAGE AS WAS APPARENTLY INTENT, BUT UNDERSTAND SOME FOREIGN
MILITARY COMPLIMENTED PRESIDENT ON THE PRESENTATION'S
"TOUGH-ON-COMMUNISM" LINE.
END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT MOLINA INVITED ENTIRE DIPLOMATIC CORPS
AND ALL FOREIGN MILITARY IN COUNTRY TO A 7:30 BREAKFAST WEDNESDAY
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PAGE 02 SAN SA 01197 01 OF 02 112302Z

(9 MARCH). UNANNOUNCED WAS TWO AND A HALF HOUR SITUATION BRIEFING
FOLLOWING BREAKFAST GIVEN TO THE UNSUSPECTING AND CAPTIVE
AUDIENCE. I ATTENDED. DATT WAS INVITED BUT WAS OUT OF COUNTRY.
ALL MEMBERS US MILGP INVITED AND FIVE OF NINE ATTENDED. OAS OB-
SERVERS, INCLUDING US OBSERVER, ATTENDED. NUMEROUS AMBASSADORS
WERE THERE AS WELL AS PRESIDENT-ELECT AND VICE-
PRESIDENT, FOREIGN MINISTER, DEFENSE MINISTER, CHIEF

JUSTICE OF SUPREME COURT, PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSMEBLY AND A
NUMBER OF HIGH SALVADORAN MILITARY OFFICERS.

2. PRESIDENT MOLINA, TAKING UP FIRST HOUR, MADE QUITE CLEAR THAT
USE OF CALLING US ALL TOGETHER WAS TO CORRECT IMAGE OF EL
SALVADOR AS "UNCIVILIZED COUNTRY" GIVEN
IT BY "AVALANCHE OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS" WHO HAVE BEEN IN
EL SALVADOR DURING PAST TWO WEEKS. HE SAID FOREIGN DIPLOMATIC CORPS,
"LIVING CLOSE AMONG US FOR LONG PERIOD OF TIME" ARE MUCH MORE
OBJECTIVE AND SURELY HAD GIVEN THEIR GOVERNMENTS THE TRUE PICTURE.
MOLINA REVIEWED ALL THE GREAT WORKS OF HIS ADMINISTRATION, ES-
PECIALLY THOSE ON BEHALF OF THE "MOST-NEEDY MAJORITY" AND IN ORDER
TO "CONSTRUCT A MORE JUST SOCIETY" AS HE HAD
PROMISED IN HIS CAMPAIGN. HE REVIEWED HISTORY OF EL SALVADOR
AND TACTICS OF COMMUNISTS IN VARIOUS ELECTIONS TO SCREAM FRAUD
LONG BEFORE ELECTIONS, TO START PROTESTING ELECTIONS EVEN
BEFORE VOTES COUNTED, AND TO TRY PROVOKE AUTHORITIES INTO ACTIONS
WHICH WOULD CREATE MARTYRS. HE ADMITTED THAT HUMAN AND MECHANICAL
ERRORS, NERVOUSNESS AND OVER-ZEALOUSNESS, AND EVEN GOOD INTENTIONS
MIGHT RESULT IN WHAT COULD APPEAR TO BE IRREGULARITIES IN ELECTIONS.
HE ADMITTED THAT WHEN HE WAS ELECTED THE MARGIN WAS SO CLOSE
DOUBT COULD BE RAISED AND HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT IT WHEN
HE TOOK OFFICE (HE TOLD THEN PRESIDENT SANCHEZ SO), BUT IN RECENT
ELECTIONS MARGIN OF 417,000 IN FAVOR HIS COLLEAGUE ROMERO WAS SO
GREAT NO ONE COULD CONTEST HIS VICTORY. THIS INCREASE OF FAVORABLE
MARGIN REFLECTED "GROWTH OF CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS",.. AND IN THIS
ELECTION "MARXIST-LENINISTS" TRUE TO FORM DID WHAT COULD BE
EXPECTED TO CREATE CHAOS AND MARTYRS, AND GOVERNMENT USED FORCE
ONLY AS A LAST RESORT TO RESTORE ORDER AND NORMALITY. HE
READ INTELLIGENCE REPORT OF GOVERNMENT PENETRATION IN OPPOSITION
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PAGE 03 SAN SA 01197 01 OF 02 112302Z

REVEALING PLANS AND INTENTIONS OF COMMUNIST
LEADERS TO DO AS GOVERNMENT HAD SUSPECTED THEY WOULD.
HE ALSO TOLD OF AN INTERVIEW WITH SECGEN COMMUNIST PARTY OF EL
SALVADOR, JORGE SHAFIK HANDAL IN "AMERICA LATINA"
NO. 1, 1976, PUBLISHED BY THE SOVIET ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES, LATIN AMERICAN INSTITUTE, EDITORIAL PROGRESO,
MOSCOW, PP 112 TO 131, COPIES OF WHICH HE PASSED OUT TO ALL
PRESENT, AND WHICH "REVEALED" THE COMMUNIST TACTICS FOR EL SALVADOR.
PRESIDENT CLOSED WITH RUN-DOWN OF FOREIGN PRIESTS AND READ FROM THEIR
DOSSIERS ABOUT THEIR SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES AND
ASSOCIATIONS, SPECIFICALLY ABOUT A BELGIAN PRIEST AND FATHER BERNARD
SURVIL, US CITIZEN, WHO WAS "WITH FECCAS AND COMMUNIST PARTY".
GOVERNMENT HE SAID HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO CARRY OUT PROVISIONS
OF LAW (ON FOREIGNERS) AND EXPEL THEM.

3. PRESIDENT MOLINA THEN TURNED MEETING OVER COL NAPOLEON AGREDA, WHO
COMMANDED OPERATION CLEANING UP THE PLAZA
LIBERTAD FEB 27-28. WITH LARGE AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH OF CENTER OF
SAN SALVAOR AND ARRAY OF PRESS CLIPPINGS ON THE
MAP BOARD HE POINTED TO BUSES BURNING, CROWDS AND PLACARDS,

ALSO THE ROSARIO CHURCH ON THE PLAZA WHICH "SUBVERSIVES HAD OCCUPIED WITH THEIR FORCES EVEN BEFORE THE CLEANUP". HE READ TO US MILITARY ORDER NR 4. CALLING COL CLARAMOUNT AND OTHERS BACK TO ACTIVE DUTY AND TOLD HOW IT WAS READ TO COLONEL IN CHURCH THAT NIGHT. HE SHOWED ORIGINALS OF DOCUMENTS SIGNED IN CHURCH BY CLARAMOUNT ABOUT HIS ALTERNATIVES AND FACT HE WAS NOT MISTREATED AND ONE WHICH SPEAKER SAID WAS CLASSIFIED WITHOUT GIVING ANY IDEA OF CONTENTS. AGREDA SAID HIS TROOPS DID NOT FIRE UNTIL SOME IN CROWD OPENED FIRE AND THREW MOLOTOV COCKTAILS AND CRQOE BOMBS. HE ADMITTED NO DEATHS, SOME WOUNDED THAT NIGHT, AND FIVE WOUNDED IN MONDAY FOLLOW-UP WHEN "COMMUNIST FORCES" INSIDE CHURCH "PROVOKED MARTYRS" BY CLOSING CHURCH DOORS ON SOME OF THEIR OWN PEOPLE SEEKING REFUGE IN CHURCH, SOME OF WHOM THEN FELL ON SPIKES OF CHURCH FENCE WHILE CLIMBING OVER. HE ADMITTED "SOME DEATHS" WHEN PRENSA GRAFICA NEWSPAPER WAS STORMED AND QUOTED PRENSA GRAFICA ITSELF WHICH SAID "MANY CARRIED ARMS". BECAUSE OF
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PAGE 04 SAN SA 01197 01 OF 02 112302Z

"PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR OF SOLDIERS" THERE WERE FORTUNATELY NONE OF THEM WOUNDED.

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 01197 02 OF 02 122121Z
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13
DHA-02 EUR-12 AID-05 MCT-01 /089 W
-----130126Z 014420 /70/73

P 112210Z MAR 77

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAN SALVADOR 1197

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 6 LINE 12)

3. FOREIGN MINISTER BORGONOVO THEN GAVE A REVIEW OF LAST YEAR'S ACTIVITY ON BORDER DISPUTE WITH HONDURAS, WHY MEDIATION AGREEMENT WAS HELD UP, AND STATED

AGREEMENT WOULD BE SENT FIRST OF WEEK TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR RATIFICATION. HE EXPECTED THAT FIRST MEETING WITH MEDIATOR COULD BE HELD IN 30 TO 45 DAYS. PRESIDENT OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AT BREAKFAST BEFOREHAND TOLD ME IT WOULD TAKE TWO MONTHS FOR AGREEMENT TO GO THROUGH ASSEMBLY.

4. MEETING ENDED WITH ARTICULATE AND FORCEFUL PRESENTATION BY COLONEL ROMERO, WHO TOLD HOW HE WON THE ELECTION,--BY HARD CAMPAIGNING,-- AND HOW OPPOSITION SIMPLY DID NOT HAVE IT, THAT THEIR LEADER WAS WEAK, AND THAT IT WAS ALLIED WITH COMMUNISTS. HE INSISTED HE COULD NOT TALK BADLY BEFORE THIS GROUP ABOUT HIS OPPONENT, A COMRADE-IN-ARMS, BUT HE WOULD SPEAK TO HIM PRIVATELY LATER. HE SAID HE GOT BACK OVER 100,000 VOTES THAT MOLINA HAD LOST TO TWO SPLINTER GROUPS IN 1972. THEN HE REVIEWED PLANS OF HIS UPCOMING ADMINISTRATION.

5. AT BREAKFAST PRESIDENT PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY, RUBEN ALFONSO RODRIGUEZ, AND CHIEF JUSTICE OF SUPREME COURT, ROGELIO CHAVEZ TALKED TO ME ABOUT "INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST" THREAT TO COUNTRY, HOW CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WERE NOT FRIENDS OF US AND WERE "STUPID TOOLS" OF CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 SAN SA 01197 02 OF 02 122121Z

THE COMMUNISTS. RODRIGUEZ OFFERED SEND ME TRANSCRIPTS FROM ASSEMBLY DEBATES WHICH PROVED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS' ATTACKS AGAINST US. I SAID THAT NEED TO PUT DOWN TERRORISM AND SUBVERSION DID NOT JUSTIFY TORTURE AND OTHER VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND THAT ABOVE ALL THEY AS LAWYERS SHOULD AGREE THAT A COUNTRY OF LAWS SHOULD TAKE ACTIONS ACCORDING TO THOSE LAWS, AND THAT TERRORISTS SHOULD ENJOY RIGHTS GUARANTEED UNDER THEIR LAWS AND ACCEPTED INTERNATIONAL STANDARD OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR SUCH THINGS AS BEING INFORMED OF CHARGES, AND FAIR AND SPEEDY TRIAL. I TOLD THEM ABOUT A WOMAN FROM SONSONATE WHO HAD COME TO ME IN EMBASSY DAY BEFORE (A SRA AIDA DE AMAYA) TO TELL ABOUT HER HUSBAND (CARLOS AMAYA SANTOS, PRIMARY TEACHER, ACTIVE WITH UNO AND MEMBER OF A GROUP CALLED "ANDES-21 DE JUNIO") WHO HAD BEEN PICKED UP FROM THEIR HOME AT 1:00 AM THE SATURDAY BEFORE (5 MARCH) BY SIX PLAINCLOTHESMEN ARMED WITH MACHINE GUNS AND IDENTIFYING THEMSELVES AS "NATIONAL POLICE". ALL HER EFFORTS BEFORE ALL AUTHORITIES SHE COULD REACH TO LOCATE HIM WERE TO NO AVAIL, SO SHE CAME TO US EMBASSY BECAUSE HER HUSBAND HAD WORKED WITH "THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS IN UNO AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS HAD JUST TAKEN OVER POWER IN THE US", AND SURELY COULD HELP HER. I TOLD THEM I HAD TO TELL HER THAT I COULD NOT HELP, THAT HER ONLY RECOURSE WAS WITHIN EL SALVADOR, BUT ASKED THEM HOW A PERSON IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES, IF STORY WAS TRUE, COULD BE HELD INCOMMUNICADO WHERE HIS FAMILY AND LOVED ONES COULD NOT REACH HIM AND WERE IGNORANT OF HIS FATE. RODRIGUEZ REMARKED IT WAS LEFTIST TEACHERS LIKE THUY ONE WHO WERE PART OF PROBLEM.

6. COMMENT: THIS MEETING WAS AN APPARENT FIRST

EFFORT OF PRESENT GOVERNMENT AND GOVERNMENT-ELECT AFTER
THE ELECTION EVENTS TO "IMPROVE IMAGE OF EL SALVADOR".
(ALTHOUGH WE HEAR THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND FRIENDS OF THE
GOVERNMENT ARE WORKING ON A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM, THIS TYPE
OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS MEETING IS GENERALLY CALLED AFTER EVERY CRISIS--
SEE EMBTEL 3042 ON JULY 30, 1975 DISTURBANCES.) I DON'T KNOW
REACTION OK REST OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS BUT I WOULD CONSIDER THE
GOVERNMENT EFFORT WAS ONLY MIXED SUCCESS --BECAUSE OF THE WAY
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PAGE 03 SAN SA 01197 02 OF 02 122121Z

IT WAS DONE (PRACTICALLY LOCKING US UP FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS
WITHOUT ADVANCE NOTICE) AND OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE PRESENTATION(
AN OBVIOUS EFFORT TO COVER-UP EVENTS AND FACTS DISAGREEABLE OR
PROJUDICIAL TO THE GOVERNMENT THAT
IS BELITTLING NUMBER OF DEATHS AND WOUNDED AND EXTENT
OF USE OF FORCE). I UNDERSTAND, HOWEVER, SOME MILITARY
ATTACHES WERE HEARD COMPLIMENTING THE PRESIDENT AFTERWARD FOR
THE "TOUGH-ON-COMMUNISM" PRESENTATION. TEN OR TWENTY YEARS
AGO, OR MAYBE LESS, WE MIGHT HAVE DONE THE SAME.
NEWSPAPER EL MUNDO (9 MARCH) TOLD OF THIS MEETING WITH FRONT PAGE
PICTURE OF BREAKFAUG SAYING THAT "AFTER THE BREAKFAST THE DIPLOMATS
EXCHANGED IMPRESSIONS WITH THE PRESIDENT AND HIS COLLABORATORS
ABOUT THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COUNTRY".
THE GUESTS UTTERED NOT RPT NOT ONE WORD.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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From: SAN SALVADOR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PGOV, PINS, ES, (MOLINA BARRAZA, ARTURO ARMANDO)
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